

EXHIBIT A

NOTICE TO BRIDGEWATER STATE HOSPITAL PATIENTS
PLACED IN SECLUSION OR RESTRAINT
Minich, et al. v. Commissioner of Correction, et al.

The Court has approved a Settlement Agreement in a class action law suit challenging the improper use of Seclusion and Restraint at Bridgewater State Hospital. All patients at Bridgewater are protected by the Settlement Agreement. A copy of the Agreement is available in the law library. Under the Agreement:

- Patients may not be placed in Seclusion or Restraint except in an emergency, such as the occurrence of, or imminent, serious threat of, extreme violence, personal injury, or attempted suicide;
- Patients may not be kept in Seclusion or Restraint any longer than necessary;
- Patients in Seclusion must be housed in hygienic conditions; they may shower daily, and may brush their teeth twice daily. Patients in Restraint shall have reasonable access to food, drink, a toilet or bedpan, and other personal needs;
- Unless clinically contraindicated, patients in Seclusion may have access to visits, telephones, reading materials, and exercise.

Other important provisions of the Settlement Agreement include:

- Bridgewater will establish alternatives to Seclusion and Restraint such as Quiet Rooms, and, for patients at high risk of placement in Seclusion or Restraint, Individual Crisis Prevention plans;
- Prompt medical assessment and monitoring of patients in Restraint;
- Training of clinical and correctional staff to prevent inappropriate use of Seclusion and Restraint;
- Creation of a Family Support Group to improve the quality of contact between families and patients;
- Designation of the Disability Law Center as an independent Monitor to ensure compliance with the terms of the Agreement.

If you have questions about your rights under the Settlement Agreement, you may contact the lawyers for the Class.

Prisoners' Legal Services
10 Winthrop Square, 3rd Flr
Boston, MA 02110
(617) 482-2773

Mental Health Legal
Advisors Committee
24 School Street, 8th Flr
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 807-1841

Roderick MacLeish, Jr.
Clark, Hunt, Ahern & Embry
150 Cambridgepark Drive
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 494-1920

I have sought legal
intervention from all three